

Staff Report

General Plan and Environmental Impact Report Kings Beach State Recreation Area

I. DEPARTMENT RECOMENDATION

California State Parks recommends that the State Park and Recreation Commission (Commission) adopt the proposed resolution to approve the Preliminary General Plan/Final Environmental Impact Report (GP/FEIR) for Kings Beach State Recreation Area (the park).

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The park is located in the community of Kings Beach on the north shore of Lake Tahoe. The initial 6.8 acres of the park was acquired in 1974 and operated by the North Tahoe Public Utility District (NTPUD) until 2014. The operating boundary of the park currently occupies 13.9 acres which includes 1.36 acres owned by the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy). Commercial and residential uses and 1,000 linear feet of Lake Tahoe shoreline surround KBSRA. The park is the center of many community functions and special events.

The process of updating the park's General Plan began in the spring of 2016, to respond to concerns that the motorized boat ramp and existing pier were often unusable due to low lake levels. Other factors included the Department of Boating and Waterways property/facilities transferring to DPR and the Department now controlling management of the unit from the NTPUD. A grant from the Conservancy for \$575,000 provided significant financial assistance to fund the preparation of this general plan.

As a project level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) this document analyses the potential impacts to a level that will allow DPR to move forward projects without additional CEQA analysis unless the projects deviate from that described in the EIR. The plan establishes goals and guidelines to assist in the daily and long-term management of the park to ensure that its resources are protected, while encouraging a variety of recreation activities.

III. PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS

In August 1980, the Commission approved a Resource Management Plan, General Development Plan (GDP), and Environmental Impact Report for the park. The 1980 plan, developed in conjunction with the NTPUD, guided improvements and management for over 35 years.

Subsequent to these Commission actions, California State Parks (CSP) prepared this General Plan revision to improve an aging recreational facility in need of updated facilities to accommodate diverse uses. All planning and design stems from the park's unique declaration of

purpose: to provide public access to the unique experience of Lake Tahoe and the recreational opportunities offered by its waters, shoreline, beach, and adjacent community setting. The park is significant as the only Lake Tahoe public beach and pier in the State Park System located in a town-center setting. Its most important values are its magnificent alpine lake scenery, wide sandy beach, and opportunities for boating, swimming and beach play. This most recent revision to the park's General Plan builds upon the vision set forth in the earlier version to create a state recreation area that is a destination for the residents of the Tahoe basin, the state of California, and other states and foreign countries.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The General Plan process for the park began spring of 2016 with a public scoping meeting/workshop at the North Tahoe Event Center. Two additional public workshops were held, in fall 2016 and winter 2017. Additionally, interagency input was obtained through agency scoping as part of the environmental review process and from in-person meetings with stakeholder groups. Public outreach included a variety of methods: three public workshops; a webpage on State Parks' website; two interactive web Open Town Halls and mailing materials, including emails, postcards, flyers, and newsletters. Notices of the public meetings were placed at the park and notifications were posted on agency and stakeholder web pages.

All comments on the plan and process at all points during the process were fully considered, ensuring that community members and other stakeholders were fully vested in a transparent planning process. The Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR was posted for a 60-day review period beginning on May 1, 2018 and ending June 29, 2018.

V. HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The park has grown from a local beach to a regional destination over the 44 years of DPR ownership. DPR designated this 6.82 acres as the Kings Beach State Recreation Area on July 1, 1977 for the purpose of providing public ownership of, and access to the beautiful Lake Tahoe shoreline. The Conservancy acquired 10 parcels totaling 1.4 acres adjacent to the original 6.82 acres at a cost of \$4.2 million and demolished dilapidated hotels blocking the views of the lake. The Conservancy then constructed a small urban plaza linking to the park to the community. A 2014 agreement between DPR and the Conservancy included a clause addressing amending the park general plan adjusting boundaries to include these other State-owned properties in a cooperative management arrangement. Improvements proposed under this general plan do not differentiate between state land ownerships and seamlessly integrate all state lands within the general plan boundary through detailed site designs.

The area to the east of the original 6.82 acres, which includes a boat ramp and related amenities, was owned by the California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) when

the GDP was approved in 1980. This area is comprised of nine parcels totaling 4.81 acres. In 2013 DBW became a division of DPR, adding the boat ramp parcel to the land owned by DPR and the operating boundary of the park.

In May 2014, operation and maintenance of the park and the boat launch facility was officially transferred from NTPUD to DPR. In October 2014, DPR and the Conservancy entered into an Operating Agreement that allows the park and the adjoining Conservancy-owned lands to be managed and operated by DPR as a single unit.

Constructed in 1958 as the Kings Beach Center, known now as the North Tahoe Event Center functioned over the years as a furniture store, bowling alley and finally a music venue which closed in 1968. Twenty years later the building was renovated with Placer County funding as the North Tahoe Event Center.

VI. PLAN ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

The following issues and opportunities were considered in the Draft General Plan. These included:

- meet current industry standards for pier structures associated with large inland waterbodies;
- enhance recreation access to KBSRA (and the community of Kings Beach) from the lake by motorized and non-motorized watercraft;
- enhance recreation access to the lake from KBSRA beachgoers, including general recreation and motorized and non-motorized craft users;
- improve lake access for persons with disabilities;
- improve functional access to the pier for a range of recreational boating types over a wider range of lake levels;
- be compatible with applicable land use plans and other recreation uses in KBSRA, on land and on the water;
- provide opportunities for publicly accessible scenic vistas, interpretation, education, as well as for watercraft access;
- minimize environmental impacts; and
- promote public health and safety, including a safe access point to Lake Tahoe and a safe location for temporary mooring for boaters along the North Shore.

Below is a summary of the major issues/concerns addressed in the GP/EIR, others can be found in Chapter 3 – Issues and Analysis of the Preliminary GP/Draft EIR dated May 2018:

ISSUE #1: Parking Demand. The preferred alternative plan reduces parking by 20 spaces (11%) from the existing condition (177 spaces to 157 spaces). The planning team as well as the DPR Planning, Policy and Programming Committee (PPPC) agreed that a slight reduction in the

parking count to provide more space for a variety of recreational facilities would better meet the purpose and vision for the park.

ANALYSIS: The parking lot is at capacity many days during the summer months (mid-June through mid-August) however, sufficient parking space exists during the remainder of the year. Comment letters by Placer County and the North Tahoe Business Association (NTBA) identified this as an impact to the community during summer months as visitors have to find other places to park when the lot is full. To encourage pedestrian and multi-modal transportation related to the park the GP includes the following actions/facilities:

- 1) beachfront promenade
- 2) increased bike parking and support of share-bike programs
- 3) variable-priced parking
- 4) improve flow of vehicles to parking from Highway 28,
- 5) support local partners in seeking funding and provide drop-off areas for micro-transit
- 6) accommodate north lake shore water shuttle services consistently with a longer pier

ISSUE #2: Pier effects on prime fish habitat. The preferred alternative pier location slightly effects “feed and cover” fish habitat.

ANALYSIS: A recent study completed by a third party research group defined areas of prime fish habitat on the north shore of Lake Tahoe. The pier would affect “feed and cover” versus “spawning” which permits mitigation of this affect. The design goal of reaching deep-water perpendicular to the prevailing wave direction did not allow for avoidance of this fish habitat. This mitigation would include the creation (installation of rock and gravel) at a ratio of 1.5:1 on the lake bottom providing additional “feed and cover” habitat. Consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife confirmed this is an acceptable mitigation.

ISSUE #3: Removal of the motorized boat ramp. The minimal functionality of this ramp due to lakebed conditions especially during low water has affected the amount of time boats can be launched from the ramp. Without dredging a channel from the ramp to the lake, the ramp has been closed 75% of the time since 2008.

ANALYSIS: With the nearest motorized boat ramp 1.3 miles west of the park and the annual number of launches from the park since 2001 at 210 the effect of removing this ramp on the Tahoe motorized boating community is less than significant. The goal at the park is to enhance non-motorized boating that is more congruent with the extensive beach use of the park. Public support for non-motorized boating was substantial at the public workshops and consultation with the Division of Boating and Waterways supported the removal of the ramp and replacing it with a beach access facility for non-motorized watercraft.

VII. LEGAL ISSUES

There are no known legal issues relating to the Commission's approval of the General Plan/EIR for Kings Beach State Recreation Area.

VIII. FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impact as a result of adopting this general plan. However, approving the plan will lead to the opportunity to acquire a construction permit from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to rebuild the pier in the new location and remove the motorized boat ramp. Funding to rebuild the pier and provide maintenance and operations staff to manage the facility will be needed.

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Kings Beach State Recreation Area Regional Location

Figure 2: KBSRA Preferred Alternative

Figure 3: Event Center Plaza and Promenade

Figure 4: Overlook at Park Entry

Figure 5: Event Stage and Beach Access

Figure 1: Kings Beach State Recreation Area Regional Location



Figure 2: KBSRA Preferred Alternative



Figure 3: Event Center Plaza and Promenade



Figure 4: Overlook at Park Entry

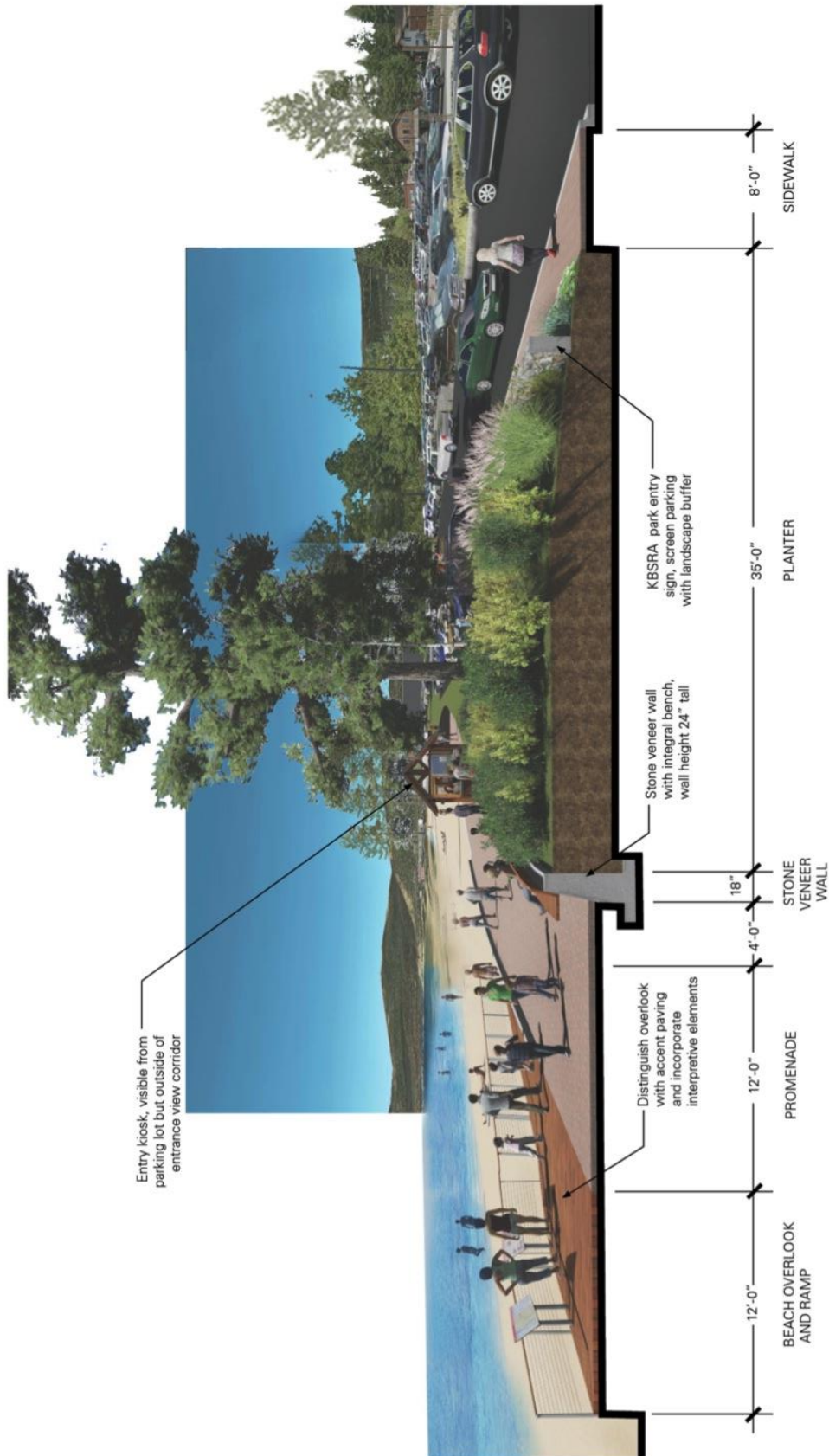


Figure 5: Event Stage and Beach Access

